25X1A2a Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA-RDP82-00457R00240

CLASSIFICATION

COLLUNITIAL CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY

Venezuela

DATE DISTR.

SUBJECT

Maracaibo Oil Jorkers Strike

NO. OF PAGES 1

3 March 1949

PLACE ACQUIRED

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NO. OF ENCLS.

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

DATE OF IN 25X1X6

- Approximately 90 per cent of the oil workers at the Tia Juana field were out on strike as of the morning of 2 March 1949.* The Punta Gorda power plant at Cabinas was in full operation. Agitation to persuade the remaining workers to go out on strike continued. Inflammatory handbills also continued to circulate.
- The Red Communist (Partido Comunista de Venezuela PCV) controlled petroleum syndicate office was reported closed, and six police were occupying the
- 3. Lt. Col. Roberto Casanova planned to place an Army cordon around the Cabimas district for the purpose of containing the strike in that area. Two more clandestine radio transmitters were seized by the Army in the Maracaibo area on the night of 1 March 1949.
- The workers at the West Lake oil fields of Mara and Concepcion struck in sympathy with the Cabinas and Tia Juana strikers on the afternoon of 1 March 1949. Maracaibo and the other areas were still unaffected and normal.
- 5. As a means of forcing a showdown with the strikers the Army issued an official decree which called for at least 51 per cent of the strikers to be back on the job by 7 a.m., 2 March 1949. If less than 51 per cent of the strikers reported to work, the Army planned to declare a state of siege in the Cabimas and Tia Juana areas, send all workers home, and close down the entire area. Soldiers would then canvass each worker as to his willingness to return to work. When a majority of the workers had agreed to return, the fields would be reopened and the workers guaranteed military protection.
- 6. With the exception of utilities, all activity in this area was paralyzed, and the 7 p.m. curfew had been imposed. No safe conduct passes were being issued, and anyone leaving his residence by day or night must be personally escerted by a rational guardsman or run the risk of being shot on sight. The strike has been orderly so far, and no incidents have been reported.
- 7. The Army at the present time is not contemplating disciplinary measures against the strikers in the West Lake fields.

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Comment. This high nercentage of strikers at the Tia Juana field is believed due to the fact that most of these workers live in Cabinas and commute to Tia Juana. The workers who reside in Tia Juana were reported on the job.

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